

## Message Text

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PAGE 01     PRETOR 03690 291910Z  
ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00  
NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-01  
INR-10 L-03 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 /079 W  
-----092607 291920Z /46

O 291825Z JUN 78

FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 1571  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE  
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY GABORONE IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY LAGOS IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRETORIA 3690

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PORG, SF, WA  
SUBJECT: NAMIBIA: SAG RESPONSE TO JUNE 22 DEMARCHE

REF: USUN 02723

1. FOREIGN MINISTER BOTHA, I BELIEVE, APPRECIATES  
THAT THE SUGGESTION IN REGARD TO THE OSHEVELLO OPTION DOES  
NOT REPRESENT A CHANGE IN THE WESTERN PROPOSAL AND THAT  
ITS ACCEPTANCE BY THE SAG WOULD HAVE NEGLIGIBLE DISADVANTAGES  
FOR SOUTH AFRICA. THERE IS SOME SUGGESTION THAT BRAND  
FOURIE VIEWED THE WESTERN PROPOSAL AS A TOLERABLE IDEA.  
THE DAY AFTER THE WESTERN DEMARCHE OF JUNE 22, NEIL VAN  
HEERDEN, IN A CONVERSATION WITH THE EMBASSY POLITICAL  
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COUNSELOR APPEARED POSITIVE ABOUT THE SUGGESTION. VAN  
HEERDEN SAID HE THOUGH IT WAS "A POSSIBILITY." WE  
SUSPECT VAN HEERDEN WAS REFLECTING FOURIE'S INITIAL  
REACTION.

2. WE SUSPECT DEFENSE MINISTER P.W. BOTHA, WHO WAS  
NO DOUBT CONSULTED, HAD A SIGNIFICANT HAND IN DETER-

MINATION OF THE SAG RESPONSE TO THE FIVE'S JUNE 22 DEMARCHE. IT IS ALSO CONCEIVABLE THAT PIK BOTHA AND VORSTER BELIEVED THAT IF THE PROPOSAL WAS TO BE CONSIDERED AT ALL IT WOULD BE UNWISE TO GIVE AN IMMEDIATE POSITIVE RESPONSE. TO HAVE DONE SO WOULD HAVE SURRENDERED A BARGAINING TOOL AND IMPLIED SAG ACCEPTANCE OF THE WESTERN RATIONALE BASED UPON PREJUDICIAL ACTIONS BY THE SAG, INCLUDING THE CASSINGA RAID. DEMANDING A QUID PRO QUO RELIEVES THE SAG OF THIS PROBLEM AND AT LEAST OBLIGES A TRY AT SECURING SOMETHING FROM SWAPO. PERHAPS MOST IMPORTANTLY, THE SOUTH AFRICANS MAY WELL HAVE CALCULATED THAT, IF THEY ACCEPTED THE SUGGESTION OUTRIGHT, SWAPO WOULD VERY LIKELY HAVE RESPONDED WITH MORE DEMANDS.

3. WHETHER THE SAG IS PREPARED TO MOVE IN THE DESIRED DIRECTION IF ASSURED THAT IT WOULD REMOVE THE FINAL BARRIER TO AN AGREED SETTLEMENT IS UNCERTAIN. DEFENSE MINISTER P.W. BOTHA PRESUMABLY MADE A STRONG POINT ABOUT THE SUPPOSED MILITARY DISADVANTAGES OF GIVING UP OSHEVELLO. IF THE SAG ASKED FOR THE REACTION OF THE TURNHALLE LEADERS IN NAMIBIA, THEY ALSO MAY HAVE OPPOSED THE IDEA ON THE GROUNDS THAT IT WOULD HAVE REMOVED THE SINGLE REMAINING SAG MILITARY PRESENCE IN OVAMBO. ALTHOUGH OSHEVELLO IS IN FACT ONLY A RUDIMENTARY BASE JUST INSIDE OVAMBO TERRITORY, THE PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTOR WOULD BE IMPORTANT TO THE TURNHALLE GROUP.  
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4. THE SAG MAY ALSO NOW FEEL THAT IT IS IN A RELATIVELY ADVANTAGEOUS POSITION TO WAIT OUT A SWAPO DECISION. THEY QUITE CONCEIVABLY BELIEVE THAT REACTION TO THE CASSINGA RAID HAS FADED, AT LEAST IN THE WEST, AND THAT THEIR REITERATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF THE PROPOSALS WHILE AT THE SAME TIME INITIATING REGISTRATION OF VOTERS HAS PUT THEM IN A BASICALLY FAVORABLE POLITICAL POSITION.

5. WHILE KEEPING OPEN THE TRACK TOWARD A POSSIBLE INTERNAL SETTLEMENT, VORSTER AND PIK BOTHA LIKELY CONTINUE PREPARED, IF THEY DO NOT ACTUALLY PREFER, TO PROCEED ON THE BASIS OF THE WESTERN PROPOSAL. THERE REMAINS A CHANCE THAT, IF SWAPO ACCEPTED THE PROPOSAL ON OSHEVELLO AS THE BASIS OF A FINAL AGREEMENT, THE SAG WOULD IN THE END ALSO ACCEPT IT.

6. THE CONTACT GROUP'S PROPOSED COURSE OF ACTION (REFTEL) WOULD SEEM THE BEST AVAILABLE IN THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES. IN DRAWING UP TALKING POINTS FOR NYERERE, THE CONTACT GROUP MIGHT ALSO CONSIDER INCLUDING OTHER CLARIFICATIONS ABOUT MEASURES WHICH COULD BE TAKEN TO CONTROL

AND MONITOR THE SAG RESIDUAL FORCE.

7. LOOKING AHEAD, IF SWAPO PROVIDES A POSITIVE RESPONSE AND SOUTH AFRICA STILL REFUSES TO ACCEPT THE SUGGESTION ON OSHEVELLO, THE CONTACT GROUP MAY WISH TO GIVE TENTATIVE THOUGHT TO PROPOSING VARIATIONS. FOR EXAMPLE, THE SAG MIGHT UNDERTAKE TO WITHDRAW THE ELEMENTS OF ITS RESIDUAL FORCE FROM OSHEVELLO ONE MONTH AFTER THE BEGINNING OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN PROVIDED THESE CONTINUED TO BE A VISIBLE PEACE. THAT VISIBLE PEACE WOULD BE THE QUID PRO QUO.

8. RE PARA 3 OF REFTTEL, THE PRETORI FIVE CAME DOWN VERY HARD ON THE SAG ASSERTION THAT OUR SUGGESTION OF CONFIDENTIAL

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THE GROOTFONTEIN OPITON WAS AN ALTERATION OF OUR PROPOSAL, SO THE RECORD SHOULD BE CLEAR ON THIS POINT. HOWEVER, WE DID NOT HAVE TIME TO DISCUSS THE WALVIS BAY ISSUE, AND IT PROBABLY WOULD BE DESIRABLE TO SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT ON SOME OF THE POINTS RAISED BY THE SAG. PARAGRAPH 14 OF THE SAG RESPONSE (PRETORIA 3646) ERRONEOUSLY DESCRIBES THE TEXT OF A PROPOSED WESTERN STATEMENT AS ONE WHICH THE FIVE SAID THEY WOULD MAKE RATHER THAN AS ONE THEY WERE CONSIDERING. FURTHER, PARAGRAPH 16 SUGGESTS THAT AN UNDERSTANDING ON WALVIS BAY IS "AN IMPORTANT AND MATERIAL PART OF THE PROPOSAL AS A WHOLE", DESPITE THEIR EARLIER EMPHASIS ON THE POINT THAT WALVIS BAY FALLS OUTSIDE THE PROPOSAL. EDMONDSON

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## Message Attributes

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